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present on the surface of said mononuclear phagocyte and thereby inhibits said CD44-facilitated infection of said mononuclear phagocyte by said strain of a HIV.

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CONT.

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~~27~~. (New) The method according to claim ~~26~~ wherein said anti-CD44 antibody is A3D8.

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~~28~~. (New) The method according to claim ¹~~26~~ wherein said mononuclear phagocytes are *in vitro* mononuclear phagocytes.

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~~29~~. (New) A method of inhibiting, in a patient, CD44-facilitated HIV infection of mononuclear phagocytes susceptible to infection with a strain of HIV comprising administering to said patient an amount of soluble CD44 sufficient to inhibit said CD44-facilitated infection of said mononuclear phagocytes by said strain of a HIV.

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~~30~~. (New) A method of inhibiting, in a patient, CD44-facilitated HIV infection of mononuclear phagocytes susceptible to infection with a strain of HIV comprising administering to said patient an amount of CD44 oligopeptides sufficient to inhibit said CD44-facilitated

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infection of said mononuclear phagocytes by said strain of a HIV.

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31. (New) The method according to claim ~~30~~ wherein said CD44 oligopeptide selected from the group consisting of CD44-1 (SEQ ID NO:1), CD44-2 (SEQ ID NO:2), CD44-3 (SEQ ID NO:3), CD44-4 (SEQ ID NO:4), CD44-5 (SEQ ID NO:5), CD44-6 (SEQ ID NO:6), CD44-6a (SEQ ID NO:7), CD44-7 (SEQ ID NO:8), CD44-8 (SEQ ID NOS: 9, 10 AND 11), CD44-9 (SEQ ID NO:12), CD44-10 (SEQ ID NO:13), CD44-11 (SEQ ID NO:14), CD44-12 (SEQ ID NO:15), and CD44-13 (SEQ ID NO:16).

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32. (New) The method according to claim ~~26~~, ~~28~~ or ~~30~~ wherein said phagocyte is a human monocyte.

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33. (New) The method according to claim ~~26~~, ~~28~~ or ~~30~~ wherein said infection is HIV-1 infection.

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34. (New) The method according to claim ~~26~~, ~~28~~ or ~~30~~ wherein said mononuclear phagocytes are vaginal cells.

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35. (New) The method according to claim ~~26~~ wherein said contacting is effected by topical administration.

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